

AMAA news



Հրատարակութիւն Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան

Publication of the Armenian Missionary Association of America

July • August • September 2013 - XLVII No. 4 (ISSN 1097-0924)



Levon Filian, AMAA Executive Director, with
Armenia President Serge Sargsyan

Visit With President Sargsyan

Levon Filian

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the President of Armenia, Serge Sargsyan, for the opportunity to meet with him and to share with him what the AMAA does around the world and specifically in Armenia and Karabagh. Here is a brief report on the meeting.



On June 28, 2013, the President welcomed a delegation from the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), led by Executive Director Levon Filian. During their hour long discussion, Mr. Filian shared with the President the mission work the AMAA does globally in 24 countries for all Armenians. He focused on the work the AMAA has done in Armenia since the earthquake, providing humanitarian assistance to Armenians of all ages. Humanitarian aid, health clinics, medical programs, camp activities, day centers, kindergartens, and schools were discussed, with an emphasis on education. He also presented plans the AMAA has in building three new centers in Armenia. Delegation members, Harout Nercessian, AMAA-Armenia Representative, Arsen Manassyan, AMAA-Karabagh Representative, and Lusine Ohanian, AMAA-Armenia Government Affairs Coordinator, elaborated on the work the AMAA does in cooperation with other organizations. This work includes job creation with UNDP, helping with micro businesses with Heifer International, a joint effort for a day center with the Tufenkian Foundation, and other job creation activities with Fuller and ARDA.

The discussions continued on subjects that weigh heavily on the hearts of all Armenians. These subjects included the crisis in Syria, how we can help our brothers and sisters in Syria and also those who have sought refuge in Armenia and elsewhere, the creation of jobs, and opportunities in Armenia which will help attract businesses to improve the economy.

President Sargsyan thanked the AMAA for its efforts to help Armenians worldwide and especially in the homeland. He expressed his support and willingness to help the AMAA ministry. Mr. Filian thanked the President for the opportunity to share and exchange ideas with him, and invited the President to join the AMAA in September, 2014 at the opening ceremonies of the newly constructed Avedisian School in Yerevan which will provide education to over 700 Armenian students from kindergarten to 12th grade.

We at the AMAA, following the Biblical mandate, commit ourselves to praying for our country and its leader. In 1st Timothy 2:1-4, we read "I urge then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people, for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our savior, who wants all people to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth." □



Levon Filian, AMAA Executive Director, meeting with the President of Armenia Serge Sargsyan. Seated to the left are AMAA-Armenia staff Arsen Manassyan, Lusine Ohanian and Harout Nercessian.

AMAA NEWS

is a publication of
The Armenian Missionary Association of America
31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652
Tel: (201) 265-2607; Fax: (201) 265-6015
E-mail: amaa@amaa.org
Website: www.amaa.org

The AMAA is a tax-exempt, not for profit organization under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3)

Levon Filian, Executive Director
David Aynejian, Director of Finance

OFFICERS

Joseph Zeronian, Ed.D., President
Nazareth Darakjian, M.D., Vice President
Peter Kougasian, Esq., Vice President
Thomas Momjian, Esq., Recording Secretary
Arsine Phillips, Esq., Recording Secretary
Nurhan Helvacian, Ph.D., Treasurer
Anita Buchakjian, Assistant Treasurer

EDITORIAL BOARD

Levon Filian, Editor
Louisa Janbazian, Associate Editor, Art Director
Jane Wenning, Contributor
David Aynejian, Advisor

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

In order to keep our mailing list up to date, please send all corrections, along with the old address, to:
AMAA NEWS
31 West Century Road
Paramus, NJ 07652
E-mail: amaanews@amaa.org

DESIGN

Caspianseal.com

PRINTING

Printsolutions.info
Englewood, NJ
Tel.: (201) 567-9622

**Now you can join us on Facebook (AMAA)
and follow us on Twitter (@AMAAInc)**

Cover Photo: Mount Ararat by Gary Phillips

AMAA Mission Tour

2013

Harout Nercessian and Gabriel Worley

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) has a tradition of organizing special mission tours for its Board members, donors and friends. These tours combine sightseeing and cultural events with visits to AMAA mission centers, providing guests with a meaningful and unforgettable experience.

This year, 32 Board members, supporters and friends of the AMAA joined the Mission Tour of 2013. The program opened on Sunday, June 23 when the guests participated in the Worship Service at the Evangelical Church of Armenia (ECA) in Yerevan. Dr. Joseph Zeronian, AMAA President, Levon Filian, AMAA Executive Director, and Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, Co-Chair of the AMAA Armenia Committee, addressed the congregation, encouraging and exhorting them from the Word of God. On that day, the guests also toured the AMAA-Armenia and ECA Headquarters located on the same campus as the Sanctuary at the heart of Yerevan.

The guests visited the Genocide Museum and remembered the massacres, pain and suffering endured by Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire. The group also visited some of Armenia's most ancient and important historical sites. The beautiful 9th century Tatev Monastery sits on the edge of a deep gorge of the Vorotan River in southeastern Armenia. It once held one of the most important Armenian medieval universities and its scholars contributed to the preservation of Armenian culture and literature during some of its most turbulent periods



Greetings from the AMAA Board members at the Sunday Worship Service at the Evangelical Church of Armenia in Yerevan.



L to R: Harout Nercessian, Anita Buchakjian, Hrair Hovnanian and Levon Filian



Gerard and Verjin Meymarians from France.

in history. Now, Tatev is also famous for its new cable car, which is the longest in the world!

Our friends also visited Sourp Khatch, a church on the Akhtamar peninsula of Lake Sevan, where they had lunch in a restaurant with a beautiful view of the shining blue lake. Other important tourist attractions included Goshavank and Geghart Monasteries, the ancient Temple of Garni, the Holy See of Echmiadzin, the Sartarapat War Memorial and the Madenataran Museum of ancient Armenian books.

In addition to learning about Armenian heritage, the guests also visited and learned about the AMAA's current missions. First, they had a short tour of Camp Hankavan and reviewed the construction work in progress and that which has been finished in the past few years. They also observed the Avedisian School building construction and were impressed at the great progress and scale of the project. A very special aspect of this trip was that the sponsors of the Avedisian School, Edward and Pamela Avedisian, and Levon Filian, AMAA Executive Director, were present at this year's graduation ceremony and personally distributed the diplomas. The young graduates and their parents were very excited. The Principal, Melania Geghamyan, and the staff were thanked for their outstanding efforts to ensure the high academic standards of the School.

The visitors were also very impressed and moved by the life changing work being done in the AMAA's new Educational After School Day Centers in Yerevan and Vanadzor. Both Centers are called "Shogh", which means "ray of light." The Centers serve needy children who have the opportunity to attend the Day Centers every day after school where they enjoy a warm and healthy meal, get help with their homework, work with social workers and have the chance to participate in enriching extracurricular activities like dance and art.

In Vanadzor, the guests saw the AMAA's Center and the ECA Church and then went on to see the AMAA Center and the ECA Church in Gyumri along with the new land where the AMAA plans to construct its new Center in Gyumri.



Some of the Yerevan Church members with Levon Filian.



Guests and Board members after Church service in Yerevan, Armenia.

The Armenia tour ended with an important play entitled "More Abundant Life" about the Musa Dagh heroic fight against the Turkish invasion. The performance presented the people of Musa Dagh's 40 day struggle for freedom and their eventual victory and deliverance by the French. The play highlighted the critical leadership role played by Rev. Dikran Antreassian, who led the fight against the Turks. After the play, Mr. Filian recognized the real life descendants of Musa Dagh survivors who were in the audience, including the granddaughter of Rev. Antreassian, Ani Darakjian. After the performance, the audience had a dance party of traditional Musa Dagh dancing and music in the vestibule of the auditorium.

This year's tour included a five-day visit to Russia. The AMAA members and friends visited the Kremlin, Red Square, St. Basil's Cathedral, the Armoury Museum in Moscow and spent two days in St. Petersburg to visit Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral, the State Hermitage Museum, The Peterhof - The Russian Versailles, and the Armenian Apostolic Church, and took a midnight boat ride on the rivers of St. Petersburg.

With its combination of tourism, Armenian heritage and learning about the AMAA's important work and growth in the region, the trip was fun, interesting and meaningful for both the guests and the hosts.

We take this opportunity to thank each and every participant on this tour. Special thanks to Elizabeth Karalian, AMAA staff member, AMAA Board members Anita Buchakjian and Arsine Phillips, and Kohar Shnorhokian, wife of AMAA Board member Hovhannes Shnorhokian, and Harout Nercessian, AMAA-Armenia Representative. They were all very instrumental in making this tour a great and memorable success. □



Newly remodeled kitchen at Camp Sheen Shoghik.



Camp Sheen Shoghik Conference Center under construction.



AMAA Board members and visitors at Camp Sheen Shoghik.



Boys Soccer Team of Vanadzor Church.



Gyumri Church Dance Class.



Camp Sheen Shoghik Dormitory.



Gyumri Center Cultural Evening.



*Forty Days of Musa Dagh Play highlighting the leadership role of Rev. Dikran Antreassian.
Dr. Ani Darakjian, granddaughter of Rev. Antreassian, being honored.*



Vanadzor Shogh Day Center.



Nor Ork Shogh Day Center.



Visiting Avedisian School construction site.



Karian family with Edward Avedisian.



*AMAA visitors at the
Dzidzernagapert Memorial
in Yerevan, Armenia*



Gary and Arsine Phillips in Yerevan, Armenia



Harout and Salpi Nercessian celebrating Harout's Birthday.



Joe and Joyce Stein enjoying life.



Dr. Ivan and Kohar Shnorhokian at Old City Yerevan.



Visiting the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia.

Armenia and Russia Trip

Experienced by Three Young Men

Three young men, sons of AMAA families from California and New Jersey, had an amazing educational opportunity to be part of the AMAA's trip to Armenia and Russia during the summer of 2013. The following are their observations and experiences from this trip.

"Going on a tour with a group is a great experience and so is going anywhere international. However, when you put the two together you get an extraordinary experience. Armenia and Russia were places I've always wanted to visit. I've always heard so much about Armenia from relatives and people from my church; it was nice to finally experience it myself. Around Yerevan everything was rather westernized but everything out in the countryside was rural and full of culture. It was rather interesting to see such a drastic change in culture within such a small country. Seeing all the work the AMAA puts into helping children throughout the country was truly amazing. The areas of Russia we visited (St. Petersburg and Moscow) were also rather modernized but still held on to their culture through many monuments and churches. Being able to tour so many places in both of these countries was a very enlightening experience that I would highly recommend to others."

Mark Buchakjian (Washington Township, NJ)



L to R: Richard Phillips, Stephen Landes and Mark Buchakjian

"As of this trip, I have been to Armenia three times; all thanks to my grandparents, Joe and Joyce Stein. It was a privilege to return to Armenia and experience Russia for the first time. I had already seen a majority of the sights we visited in Armenia; nonetheless, the Genocide Memorial is always humbling. Furthermore, the Avedisian School graduation is always fun to watch. Tatev Monastery was one of the new sights for me. Despite the eight hour round trip, I dubbed it a top church to see in Armenia. We had some of the best food there and it was accompanied by a breathtaking ride on the longest nonstop double-track cable car in the world. Our visit to Russia included the Kremlin, which means "fort" in Russian. It was like a giant Smithsonian Museum, it is hard to get the full experience on a tight schedule. Our experience in St. Petersburg, Russia was much better; there was more to see and the buildings were more beautiful. The Hermitage was one of the most amazing sights to see. The building seems endless when inside and the beauty was captivating. It is difficult to sum up such a large trip in so few words, but these are my highlights of a trip I was honored to be on."

Stephen Landes (Indian Wells, CA)

"This recent trip to Armenia was my fourth visit. I've been on three trips with the AMAA and lived there all of last summer working as an intern at the TUMO Center. It was very uplifting to see the tremendous progress of all the AMAA projects that we visited throughout the years. My first visit to the AMAA Headquarters on Baghramian Street was when AMAA had just purchased it and before all the improvements were made. It was really amazing to see the new auditorium and how it had completely changed."

"After Armenia, our trip continued to Russia. It was my first time there, and I was extremely excited to see all the churches and museums in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Both were incredibly beautiful cities and had so much rich history that was interesting to learn. I think my favorite site was the Hermitage Museum, which contained tons of spectacular paintings, sculptures, and artifacts. I could have spent an extra week in that Museum. All in all, I had a fun time with a great group of people and I look forward to the next AMAA trip."

Richard Phillips (Los Angeles, CA)

Summer Camps Provide Wonderful Experiences



Day Camp in Ijevan



Day Camp in Goris



Day Camp in Bureghavan

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) has been organizing summer camps in Armenia and Karabagh for thousands of children, teens and young adults since 1990.

Thanks to the generosity of many donors and friends of the AMAA, children, teens and young adults are able to attend AMAA/ECA summer camp programs where they can share the love of Jesus in very practical ways. Every summer, thousands of children attend AMAA/ECA Camps and Day Camps to play, learn, enhance their talents, socialize, meet new friends, learn Armenian national culture and be nourished in a Christian atmosphere of tender loving care.

In cooperation with the AMAA, during the summer of 2013 the Evangelical Church of Armenia (ECA) organized camps in two locations and DVBS in 44 towns and villages.

Camp Sheen Shoghik in the Hankavan Region of Armenia was held July 5 – September 1. This year the Camp provided: one 4-day session for camp counselors; four 7-day camp sessions for children (8-12 years old); three 5-day camp sessions for teens (13-16 years old); one 5-day camp session for Avedisian school children, *Shogh* Day Center and Syrian children; and two 4-day sessions for young adults (17-30 years old).

During the 57 days of operation, the Camp served a total of 1,600 children, teens and young adults and 120 camp counselors.

Camp Bedrosian in Shushi, Karabagh was held June 23-July 23. This Camp included: one 2-day session for camp counselors; three 7-day camp sessions for children (8-12 years old); one 5-day camp session for teens (13-16 years old); and one 4-day session for young adults (17-30 years old). During a month of operation, the Camp served a total of 580 children, teens and young adults and 40 camp counselors.

DVBS in Armenia and Karabagh

AMAA-Armenia and the Evangelical Church of Armenia also organize DVBS activities throughout Armenia and Karabagh each summer. This year, the DVBS was held in 44 towns and villages with 47 DVBS activities and over 3,500 children and teens participating. Four Day Camps in Karabagh enrolled 350 participants and 43 Day Camps in Armenia had a total of 3,150 participants. 250 volunteers served at Day Camps in Karabagh and Armenia.

The Campers were from one of three categories: participants in the AMAA's Child Sponsorship Program; participants of the ECA Christian Education Programs or needy children referred by various government agencies such as the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Camp Activities

In addition to the three meals and educational activities, the campers participated in morning exercises, morning worship service (gospel songs, drama, dis-

nce for Children in Armenia and Karabagh



Day Camp in Sisian



Day Camp in Yerevan



Camp Sheen Shoghik in Hankavan

cussions), Biblical/moral lessons in small groups, arts and crafts activities to enhance their skills to use and enable them to take home camp souvenirs, outdoor games and sports activities, creative and educational games, evening variety programs – talent shows, indoor games, national songs, dramas, and humor. The campers also received several gifts including a t-shirt, raincoat and shoes as well as toothpaste, toothbrush and shampoo.

Bible Lessons and Values

The Bible lessons are planned to meet the campers' spiritual and emotional needs. The children's theme included topics such as: "A small deed for a Great Purpose." Children should understand that each of them is able to do a small deed for God's great purpose. The teen's theme was "Who am I?" Teens should be able to clarify who they are for their family and friends: who they are for Armenia. Are they patriots? And "Who are they in God's eyes?" The young adult theme was "The beginning of wisdom." The goal of the young adult camp was that every young person should realize that real wisdom comes from God, and they need it to reach eternity. To be a good Christian also means to be a good citizen. The children were taught national values through national songs, stories about national heroes and various cultural events. During each camp session, one of the days was dedicated to the Armenian national culture.

Partners

The AMAA/ECA is most grateful for the many partners who contribute to the success of this program and to those who participated in these summer programs. Our partners include:

- Jinishian Memorial Foundation who has been a faithful partner in the AMAA camp programs for many years. It contributed financially and by supplying food and other items.
- Hope for Armenia of France who organized Day camps in Sptiak, Nalband and Sisian etc.
- We are especially grateful to the Bedrosian family for its long-term sponsorship of the AMAA Camp Bedrosian in Shushi, Karabagh.
- We are also grateful to the Christian Camps International organization, and its Founder/President Dave Lowen, for training the camp counselors.
- We are very grateful to the AMAA Office staff in Paramus, and AMAA friends who worked very hard at collecting, packing and sending various supplies (i.e. clothing, arts and crafts material, games).
- We are also grateful for the Orphan Child Care and Summer Camp Committees for their creative fundraising efforts.

We thank God for the many AMAA friends and supporters who contributed to our camps through their prayers, donations and services. Last, yet most important, we thank God for the spiritual and material blessings we enjoyed at this year's Summer Camps. □



Camp Arev 2013: California

From water games, to mud pit wars, to night time counselor hunts, more than 220 campers came to Camp Arev this past summer and will have many happy memories until the next camping season. In addition to all of these fun activities, Camp Arev's goal was to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This summer's Camp theme was #ILTERYOURLIFE. Based on social media (Facebook, Instagram, hashtags, etc.), the theme hit home with many of the campers. Using Romans 8:5, the main speakers asked campers to leave behind the desires of the flesh and live according to the Spirit. The campers learned how they could filter the distractions of social media and electronics from their lives, and instead use these blessings for the glory of God. The topic was relevant and applicable to their daily lives. Many campers came to know the Lord as Savior and King for the first time and others rededicated their lives to Christ.

Please continue to pray for Camp Arev and its ongoing ministries. Your support, both spiritual and financial, will have a lasting impact on many young lives. □



Camp Arevelk 2013: New York

This year marked the 14th anniversary of the Camp Arevelk ministry of the AEUNA, which was held at Ararat Youth Center in Greenville, NY from August 11-27. With 88 campers and over 30 counselors and staff, Camp Arevelk was filled with great excitement, fellowship and worship. This wonderful ministry has been under the supervision of Sylvia Jizmejian who has served as Camp Director since 2000.

Camp Arevelk would not be possible without the counselors and the staff who give of their time for this important ministry. This Camp has been essential in developing young leaders in the Armenian Evangelical Youth Fellowship and ultimately, the churches of the AEUNA. This year, it was wonderful to see that every single one of the counselors was a former camper.

The theme of this year's Camp focused on "Putting Yourself in Your Place." The studies focused on Romans 11:33-Romans 12:21.

The campers had quiet times, cabin times (with counselors in groups), a Bible lesson and a session from the speaker about these topics daily. Every night ended with a praise session. This year's speakers were Rev. Brandon Woosley (Grades 5-7) and Rev. Dr. Ara Jizmejian (Grades 8-11), the Bible teachers were Rev. Woosley, Rev. Shant Barsoumian and Rev. Jizmejian. Camp nurse was Arpi Sarian and the Camp Registrar was Talin Barsoumian.

The week ended with a barbeque for the campers, parents and guests with over 300 people in attendance. □



AMAA Awards \$136,250 in College Scholarships to U.S. and Canada Students

This year the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) awarded \$136,250 in scholarship to 60 worthy students who attend colleges and universities in the United States.

In addition, \$15,000 will be awarded to needy and qualified university students in Armenia. These scholarships range from \$200 to \$600 as the cost of higher education in Armenia is significantly less.

"I thank you so much for your generous scholarship on my behalf to Boston University," wrote Taleen Kalajian upon hearing that the AMAA had granted her a scholarship to help her in her studies. "I look forward to my future in becoming a pediatric orthodontist," stated Taleen, a member of the class of 2017.

For the last 90 years, the AMAA has helped thousands of students from kindergarten to high school with tuition aid and hundreds of college students with scholarships. Aid has also been given directly to schools and institutions of higher education, including Haigazian University and the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut.

The scholarships granted this year were provided from a number of AMAA scholarship funds established over the years to help students in need. Qualified students can request applications from AMAA Headquarters in Paramus, NJ beginning in January of each year. The deadline to submit applications for the 2014-2015 academic year is May 1, 2014.

Ladies Convention Meets in Montreal

Faith, Hope and Love was the theme of a Ladies Convention. Over 90 ladies participated in the Convention that was held at the Armenian Evangelical Church in Montreal, Canada over the May 31-June 1 weekend. The guest speaker was Marie Kassarian of Pasadena, CA.

The Convention's opening program was held on Friday evening. Rev. Jean Zarifian, Pastor of the Church, offered the opening prayer and the Chair of the Women's Organization, Margo Melkonian, welcomed the guests.

The main program was held on Saturday. Mrs. Kassarian presented the main theme of the Convention in three sections with the following subtitles: "Faith looks up," "Hope looks forward" and "Love looks around." The program of the day also included praise and worship sessions with singing of spiritual songs, hymns and prayers.

The Convention offered spiritual nourishment to all those who participated and an opportunity to grow in their spiritual life and become a blessing in their surroundings. □



156 Students Bid Farewell to Haigazian University

Mira Yardemian, HU PR Director

On June 28, 156 students proudly earned their bachelor's and master's degrees at Haigazian University's 53rd commencement exercises, amidst an atmosphere of cheers and emotion, thus marking the end of another successful academic year.

Among the attendees were Government Minister General Panos Manjian representing the President of the Republic, the Speaker of the Parliament, and the President of the Council of Ministers and Mohammad Al Mashnouk representing the newly appointed Prime Minister, Tammam Salam. Also present were Minister Vrej Sabounjian, MPs Sebouh Kalpakian and Shant Chinchinian, the Representative of the Commander of the Army, the first Secretary of the Armenian Embassy, Vartan Atamian, the President of the Supreme Council of the Evangelical Community in Syria and Lebanon, Rev. Selim Sahyouni, former ministers and MPs, clergy, members of the University's Board of Trustees, parents, relatives and friends.

A celebratory processional march by faculty and students was led by Chief Marshall Dr. David Tawil, followed by the Lebanese National Anthem. The Prayer of Invocation was offered by Campus Minister Rev. Bruce Schoup.

"Higher education is meant to help us look outside our window, while also looking into a mirror," said University President Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian to the Class of 2013. Emphasizing its sociopolitical and global framework, President Haidostian considered that higher education faces new manifestations: "A



world of over-integration in which one is to integrate everything into one reality, one method, be it religious, political, economic, or cultural, and a world of disintegration with the feeling that everything is falling apart, with no sense of authority, respect, or civility, a world where localized terror seems to be the globalized threat." Regarding over-integration, President Haidostian reiterated that it's the mission of education to "show that life comes in shades of various colors, realities of various shapes, and that humility, regarding our own method and our knowledge, is a key to learning and goodness," and as to disintegration, the education's mission lies in "keeping hope alive, and the promise of life being where we get free and connected with each other."

President Haidostian then introduced keynote speaker, Sarkis D. Yoghourtdjian, Assistant Director of the Banking Supervision and Regulation, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System in Washington, D.C. An international

banker, and a sought-after consultant for global banking issues, Mr. Yoghourtdjian is the recipient of the prestigious Anania Shirakatsi Medal, bestowed on him in 2012 by the President of the Republic of Armenia, for his notable service in the establishment and modernization of the Central Bank of the Republic of Armenia. Also, in November 2012, Mr. Yoghourtdjian was honored as the Man of the Year by the Union of Arab Banks during its annual gathering in Beirut. He is the first Lebanese-Armenian to be conferred such an honor.

"I have found no greater satisfaction than achieving success through honest dealings and strict adherence to the view that for you to gain, those you deal with should gain as well. Human relations – be they personal or professional – should not be zero sum games." With these words, Mr. Yoghourtdjian summed up his advice to the graduates as they embarked upon a new phase of their lives.

Talking from his personal experience and sharing his humble beginnings as a Lebanese-Armenian, Mr. Yoghourtdjian credited his success to "immeasurable perseverance, will-power, and hard work." He also focused on the notion of horizons and perspectives, and in this respect Mr. Yoghourtdjian said, "I believe that my efforts throughout my life to expand my horizons and to keep a broad perspective have helped better meet the challenges that have come my way. At the same time, because I appreciate the role of chance and contingency in human events, I try to be appropriately realistic about my own capabilities." He concluded that to be always driven by love, affirming that, "a career decision based only on money and not on love of the work or desire to make a difference, is a recipe for unhappiness."

Two students delivered speeches before their fellow classmates. Valedictorian Rayan Batlouni, a candidate for a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, hailed Haigazian University for its diversity and safe environment. "This mixture of cultures, especially the Armenian and the Lebanese, gives this University its uniqueness and richness," Batlouni noted.

For her part, Nanor Parseghian, candidate for a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, appreciated the unwavering efforts of the University administration and faculty for arming them with virtues, knowledge and confidence, thus making them ready for life's challenges. Parseghian urged her fellow classmates to act and work toward the fulfillment of their dreams, always bearing in mind to be at the service and bring pride to their country, Lebanon.

Following the Benediction offered by the President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian, the graduates threw their caps high into the air, as colorful balloons flew overhead.

The Baccalaureate Service for the Class of 2013 was held on June 23 at the First Armenian Evangelical Church in Beirut. In his remarks,



Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, President of Haigazian University, underlined the importance of the Baccalaureate Service to the graduating Class of 2013. Rev. Dr. Haidostian not only asked students to say thanks for all the grace bestowed on them, but he expressed the thankfulness of the Haigazian administration toward God for having students like them. "You kept Haigazian's heartbeat even when we were immersed in our routine. So, for you, and for everything, thank you Lord", he concluded. The keynote speaker was Rev. Nabil Shehadi, Vicar of the All Saints' International Congregation in Beirut, who

emphasized the importance of "not letting go" of God and also of their values and dreams. He pushed them to overcome all difficulties with faith and hope.

Several pastors of the community participated in this thanksgiving service. The Baccalaureate Service concluded with the Benediction of Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian, President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, whereupon the Class of 2013 marched out of the church with the recessional, each carrying the light of truth, freedom and service to the world. □

AVEDISIAN SCHOOL STUDENTS "Sail" To Next Grade

On June 25, the Year End Program and the Graduation Ceremony of the Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School of Yerevan, Armenia were held at the AMAA Headquarters in Yerevan. The hall was filled to capacity with students, parents, Avedisian School Board members and guests. Several Board members and friends of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), including AMAA Board President Dr. Joseph Zeronian and AMAA Executive Director Levon Filian, were also present.

The stage was decorated as a sailboat swinging on the blue ocean which symbolized the Avedisian School, ready for sailing. Following the orders of the Captain, the Elementary and Middle School graduates went up to the sailboat and, with their presentation of poems and songs, said farewell to their respective classes and were ready to "sail" to the second phase of their educational journey.



At the end of the program, School Principal Melania Geghamyan invited Edward and Pamela Avedisian, benefac-

tors of the School, and Levon Filian, Executive Director of the AMAA, to help in the distribution of diplomas. □



Levon Filian handing diploma to a graduate.



Edward and Pamela Avedisian challenging the students.

Commencement Exercises at the Merdinian School

The commencement exercises of the C. & E. Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School's elementary and middle school graduates were held in June at the United Armenian Congregational Church of Los Angeles, CA. Among the guests were Grigor Hovhannissian, Consul General of the Republic of Armenia in Los Angeles, Adrin Nazarian, member of the California State Council, Merdinian School Board members, faculty, parents, family, friends and alumni.

After the National Anthems of the United States and Armenia, Fredric Sayadian, 5th grade homeroom teacher, welcomed the guests and invited Rev. Ara Chakerian, Pastor of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of North Hollywood, CA, to offer the invocation.

In the first half of the ceremony, valedictory speeches on behalf of the 5th grade were delivered by Daniel Chakerian in English and Nareg Charkhedian in Armenian followed by the presentation of diplomas and awards by Principal Lina Arslanian. Councilman Adrin Nazarian's Representative Taline Deirmenjian presented each student with a Congratulatory Certificate.

On behalf of the School Board, Chairman Dr. Vahe Nalbandian praised God for another successful year and expressed his gratitude to all those who had worked in pursuit of excellence at Merdinian School throughout the year.

The School's Choir presented some spiritual and folk songs, under the leadership of Victoria Aprahamian.

The keynote speaker was Mr. Hovhannissian, Consul General of the Republic of Armenia. He congratulated the graduates, and commissioned them to

be good ambassadors of Merdinian School.

Valedictory speeches from the 8th grade were delivered by Levon Avedikian in English and Alexia Movsesian in Armenian, followed by the presentation of diplomas, awards and Councilman Nazarian's Congratulatory Certificates. Principal Arslanian congratulated the graduates and encouraged them to persevere, be steadfast, to do their best in their future endeavors, always respect others and never forget the Armenian language and heritage.

The last speaker was Adrine Nazarian, who presented a special Congratulatory Certificate (California Legislature Assembly Resolution) to Ashkhen Ispendjian, who was officially retiring after 30 years of faithful service to Merdinian as the head of the Armenian Department.

Greg Martayan, a graduate of Merdinian who is presently working for the Los Angeles Police Department, concluded the ceremony by congratulating the graduates and Mrs. Ispendjian and expressed his gratitude for the years he had spent at Merdinian.

The Ceremony concluded with the Lord's Prayer and a Benediction offered by Rev. Ara Chakerian.

The year-end program and the



Kindergarten graduation were held on June 14 at the United Armenian Congregational Church. Sixteen students graduated from the Kindergarten and received their diplomas from their homeroom teacher and the Principal.

Merdinian School, located in Sherman Oaks, CA, is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). It is serving the Armenian community since 1982 with great success and achievements. The School is undergoing major remodeling to make it more inviting and welcoming to its students and families. For more information you may call 818-907-8149. □



Graduations



The combined graduation ceremony for the 22 elementary and 16 secondary students of the **Armenian Evangelical Central High School of Ashrafieh**, Beirut, Lebanon, was an impressive occasion. Guest speaker John Sagherian asked the graduates to search for the Truth and ask questions never forgetting to depend on God Almighty. He advised them to evaluate priorities and long for the best through goodwill and perseverance.

The commencement exercise for the secondary students of the **Armenian Evangelical Shamlian Tatikian High School of Nor Marash**, Bourdj Hammoud, Lebanon was held on May 22. The students presented a program of songs, Armenian dances and recitations. Vartoug Balekjian, School Principal, wished the graduates success in their future endeavors and challenged them to be good citizens of their country, proud Armenians, but most of all to be people of good character.



The commencement exercise for the secondary students of the **Armenian Evangelical Secondary School of Anjar**, Lebanon was held on June 21. Rev. John Melkonian, with his wife Janette and their two daughters Doris and Arda, were present. Rev. Melkonian assisted School Principal Rev. Raffi Messerlian in awarding the diplomas to the graduates. His message highlighted the importance of the ministry of the School in Anjar and thanked God for the opportunity to be at the commencement service.



The commencement of **Y. M. Philibossian Armenian Evangelical College of Beirut**, Lebanon was held on July 5. Keynote speaker was Rev. Soghomon Kilagblian, Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Ashrafieh, Beirut, Lebanon, who challenged the students to always look up, smile, to love, to rise and raise others up with them. The students presented a program of songs and recitations and achievement prizes were given to deserving students. After distributing the diplomas, School Principal Dr. Zaven M. Messerlian addressed the students challenging them to be exemplary citizens, and to work hard.



Commencement exercises for the **Armenian Evangelical Bethel Secondary School of Aleppo**, Syria were held on July 7. Those present included the President of the Armenian Evangelical Community Rev. Haroutune Selimian, and the Armenian Consul to Aleppo H.E. Garek Krikorian, in addition to a number of clergy. The students presented a beautiful program of songs, music, recitals of poems, dramas and dances, which was dedicated to the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Armenian Evangelical Bethel School.



The **Armenian Evangelical Torosian School of Nor Amanos**, Bourdj Hammoud, Lebanon held its graduation for elementary and intermediate students on June 29. Keynote speaker was Sonia Sislian, Haigazian University Librarian. The school choir sang. Elementary students presented a song-dance and intermediate graduates expressed their feelings toward Torosian School. At the end of the program, 16 elementary and 13 intermediate graduates received their diplomas.

The **Armenian Evangelical Gertmenian School of Nor Hadjin**, Beirut, Lebanon held its graduation for elementary students on June 27. After a program of songs, dances and recitations, 10 students received their diplomas. The School Principal congratulated the graduates and emphasized that to be successful in life, they have to work hard. He also said that in the coming years in high schools the graduates will have to continue to do their best and work hard in order to be successful in their studies and in their lives.



The graduation ceremony of the **Armenian Evangelical Kindergarten of Kokkinia**, Athens, Greece was held on Monday, June 3. The students presented a program of songs, dances and recitations

AMAA'S 5TH MEDICAL MISSION TEAM TO ARMENIA TREATS OVER 700 PATIENTS

Dr. Al Phillips

In June, the Medical Mission Team, led by Dr. Al and Sue Phillips, returned to Armenia for its fifth year. The enthusiasm for the mission has continued to grow substantially and this is due to God's providential leading of those who served.

The Mission Team of 28 people staffed ambulatory clinics in Vanadzor and Stepanavan, Armenia. This year's team consisted of two physicians, a nurse practitioner, a pharmacist, a registered nurse, 16 essential ancillary workers, and seven Armenian translators. The Mission Team used the Vanadzor Evangelical Church and the AMAA Social Service Center in Stepanavan for their medical facilities.

Patients came from local neighborhoods and many were transported to the clinic by bus from outlying villages. Over the course of the week, over 700 patients, including adults and children, were seen. Many of the patients had been seen in previous years and relayed to us that our treatments from previous years had improved the quality of their lives. Common conditions included hypertension, diabetes and musculoskeletal problems. We purchased medications from donations and imported an extensive pharmacy. Patients received all their drugs without charge and were given enough medications to supply them with a year's worth of treatment. Also, reading glasses were distributed.

While patients were waiting to be seen, our nurse educator gave lectures on various medical issues including hypertension and diabetes. During the clinic, patients were also encouraged to attend church services; where the good news of Jesus Christ was preached. Many were touched both physically and spiritually. We were told by the local clergy that our yearly clinics have resulted in more participation in their churches throughout the year and that the Mission Team has been an encouragement to their congregations.

The Medical Mission Team has committed to return to Armenia for our sixth year in June, 2014. If you have any desire in serving our brothers and sisters in Armenia or are interested in knowing more about the medical mission, please see our website. The website link can be found on www.amaa.org. Medical and non-medical, Armenian or non-Armenian speaking volunteers are welcome. Jesus during His ministry often met the physical needs prior to addressing the spiritual needs of those He met. We are committed to emulating His love in Armenia. □



A patient seen last year returns for her examination with her old prescriptions to be refilled.



The 5th Medical Mission Team at Vanadzor Church.

AMAA HOLDS INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS FOR ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL PASTORS FROM ARMENIA

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) sponsored two Internship Programs for Armenia Evangelical Church (AEC) pastors in 2013.

One of the Internship Programs was held in Beirut, Lebanon where five graduates from the Christian Academy of Armenia spent time with seasoned pastors to gain on the job training and gain experience in preparing and delivering sermons, preparing and leading Bible studies, and doing hospital visitations to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of families. They also participated in youth and Sunday school activities.

The second Internship was a visit to California. Five Pastors took part in this Internship, led by Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian. They visited with and/or interviewed 19 Armenian and non-Armenian pastors, participated in several worship services, visited Armenian Evangelical Schools, Camp Arev, the Aratat Home and social service centers. They also had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of the Western Diocese and the Western Prelacy. They were the guests of Drs. Nazareth and Ani Darakjian, where they met and had fellowship with several AMAA Board members.

The Pastors returned to Armenia better prepared to preach God's Word. □



The Interns at the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, with Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian (2nd from left) and Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian (middle).



The Interns (back row) at the residence of Drs. Nazareth & Ani Darakjian. Front Row: Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian, Ani & Nazareth Darakjian and Kohar & Hratch Mouradian.



The Interns meeting with some of the pastors in Lebanon.

Scarves and Hats Donation Graciously Made to Armenia

Michelle Phillips

Dozens of colorful knitted and crocheted scarves and beanie hats adorned the steps of Asien Surmeian's stairs in preparation for the AMAA's 5th Annual Medical Mission trip that took place June 19-29, 2013. Asien beamed with joy as she proudly presented the 60 scarves and 60 beanie hats she had crafted for a year in advance in anticipation for the trip.

Contributions can be made to Asien Surmeian's knitting and crocheting effort by donating "Red Heart" yarn, which can be found at Michael's Arts and Crafts and Joann's stores. For more information on where to send the yarn, please click on the Medical Mission link which can be found on the AMAA website. □



Asien Surmeian (left) with Sue Phillips, displays her knitted scarves and beanies.

Shogh Centers Help Armenian Children Do Well in School

The Armenian government has a goal to have 25 educational, after-school Day Centers in the country by 2014. The aim of the Centers is to assist needy children with their educations.

Keeping in line with this new move in Armenia, AMAA-Armenia has opened two *Shogh* Day Centers, one in Yerevan and one in Vanadzor. In Armenian, the word *Shogh* means "beam of sun." *Shogh* is a community-based day center for children, ages 6-14, who come from needy families in the neighborhood. The staff at the Centers consists of teachers, social workers and psychologists as well as those who provide administrative and support services.

Children arrive at the Center after they finish school and they receive a hot, healthy meal. The program includes tutoring, help with homework, group and individual social and psychological work, and dance, music, drawing and crafting classes. The Centers' approach is holistic as the social workers make home visits and develop relationships with the families in order to best understand and meet the children's complex psychological, social and educational needs.

Even though the Centers are still very new, the staff has witnessed incredible changes in many of the children. Anna, a young second grader, came to the Center crying in the beginning and was completely withdrawn from all the other children. The social workers soon discovered that she was being discriminated against in her school both by her teacher and classmates. As a result, she had many educational and social issues. Anna could not even distinguish the letters of the alphabet.

The *Shogh* Center's caring staff immediately took action on Anna's behalf by meeting with her teacher and some of her classmates who also attend the Center. Today, Anna comes to



the *Shogh* Center with excitement to meet her friends in the craft group. Her interpersonal skills have greatly improved. She has opened up to the social workers and knows the alphabet and even asks the tutors for extra writing tasks.

This is one of the many stories that the Centers' staff eagerly shares, with the hope and enthusiasm that the unique dreams and full potential of every child will be met. □

New York Church

Welcomes New Pastor

Sunday, September 1 opened a new page in the life of the Armenian Evangelical Church in New York. On that day, Haig Kherlopian delivered his first sermon as the newly appointed Pastor of the Church. Young and energetic, full of enthusiasm, he delivered his message on building the church on the teachings of Christ.

A graduate of the Princeton Seminary, Pastor Kherlopian served as a Youth Leader at the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church in Havertown, PA during his studies. He also did his internship under the supervision of Rev. Nishan Bakalian, Pastor of the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church in Havertown.

Levon Filian, Executive Director of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), was asked to share his heartfelt thoughts on the occasion and to share how the AMAA is helping our brothers and sisters in Syria.

Mr. Filian congratulated Pastor Kherlopian and the congregation. He challenged them to work as a team, quoting Ecclesiastes 4:12, "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." The strands should consist of God, the Pastor and the congregation. He also shared with them the story of Moses. When he had his hands up in prayer, his army was winning, and when he got weary and tired, Aaron and Hur came to his aid and lifted his arms. Mr. Filian challenged the elders of the Church to lift their Pastor's hand and support him in all that he does.

Mr. Filian shared the tragic situation in Syria, where killings and kidnappings are daily events. He related that a



Pastor Haig Kherlopian and Levon Filian

missile recently fell on one of the schools and caused major damage. He praised the Armenian pastors and the teachers who continue to serve our precious people by risking their lives. He challenged the members of the congregation to pray diligently for peace in Syria, for all people, and especially for the Armenians, and he challenged all to help their brothers and sisters by providing financial assistance to keep our churches and schools open.

Following the Church services, the Church members congregated in the Church hall for coffee, dessert and fellowship. □

Hackensack Rotary Club awards grant for Armenia medical needs

Rotary Club of Hackensack, NJ awarded the AMAA a \$3000 grant for urgent medical needs for children under the care of AMAA Child Sponsorship Program. Just like last year's award, this grant will again help many children with various needs of medication, MRI observation, minor surgeries and urgent family care. Pictured is Mr. Serge Krikorian, Sergeant at Arms of Rotary Club, handing the check to Tigran Melkonyan, Manager of AMAA's Child Sponsorship Program.

The AMAA thanks Mr. Krikorian for helping to raise these funds for our needy children in Armenia.



AMAA-Armenia Assists Syrian Refugees

Gabrielle Worley

When the fighting broke out in Syria, refugees fled to neighboring countries with only the clothes on their backs, thinking that the fighting would subside and they would return home after a few days. However, the armed conflict has spiraled into a civil war, and the situation is getting worse.

Since the start of the Syrian civil war, over 9,000 Syrian Armenians have sought refuge in Armenia. Most of these people are living in very poor conditions, are struggling to pay rent and feed their children, and are suffering from various physical and psychological problems. Families are also suffering because they have been torn apart. Many children have become orphans and wives have become widows.

The AMAA-Armenia has created a brochure to inform the Armenian people about the current plight of Syrian Armenians and to make an appeal for assistance. This brochure has been distributed throughout Armenia's business sector, NGOs and through the AMAA's friends and churches.

With God's blessing, the AMAA-Armenia was also able to invite 250 displaced Syrian Armenian families to attend a special Christmas theater performance for children. The families came and enjoyed the show and the children received gifts

which included Christmas sweets, activity books and warm hats and scarves.

In May, the AMAA-Armenia held a fundraising concert to raise money specifically to help Syrian Armenian families pay their rent and buy food. A film, produced by AMAA-Armenia's Nouné Abrahamyan about the plight of Syrian Armenians in Armenia, was shown. The informative film was followed by a beautiful performance from the Naregatsi Folk Ensemble, a professional ensemble which plays traditional folk instruments and songs. The concert was well attended by various groups ranging from leaders of businesses and NGOs to students from universities and AMAA-Armenia staff who helped raise money for the cause.

To date, AMAA-Armenia has raised over \$11,000 locally to help Syrian Armenian refugees in Armenia. The fundraising continues. These funds are used to help families pay rent on the apartments. The AMAA-Armenia also helps Syrian Armenians obtain important medicines and medical help on an individual basis and welcomes all families to take advantage of free dental services at the Aynilian AMAA Dental Clinic in Yerevan.

On June 6 and 7, there was a special distribution for Syrian refugees in coopera-



tion with the Kentron and Arabkir districts of Yerevan. Syrian families received packages of VitaMeal which provides essential nutrients. They also received clothing items which were sent by the Garni Foundation in California and new winter boots donated by Tom's Shoes.

Let us unite to help our brothers and sisters. Let us welcome them into the safety of their ancient motherland and provide them with as much material, psychological and spiritual help as we can. As members of the body of Christ, we suffer with those whose suffer and we rejoice with those who rejoice. As God's family and with God's help, it is our responsibility to keep our candles raised in the darkest moments and offer all the encouragement, hope and love that we can to those in need. □



Donation in Memory of Genocide Survivors

Madeline and Gregory Melkonian of Forest Hills, NY recently donated \$50,000 to the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) in memory of their parents, Azad and George Melkonian. The funds will be used to sponsor 20 Armenian children for ten years through the AMAA's Child Sponsorship Program. Azad and George were both Genocide survivors. George, an only child, was born in Izmir (Smyrna). He was 15 when he arrived in New York and immediately began working to support his mother and himself. He helped found Master Photo Engraving in Manhattan.

Azad, born in Kessaria, was only three years old when the Turks massacred her father. She and her six year old sister, Siran, were placed in an orphanage in Istanbul by their mother because she had no means to care for them. There the sisters remained for three years until they were reunited with their mother. Azad was nine when she arrived in the United States.

Azad and George met at a wedding at the Holy Cross Church of Armenia in Manhattan, and, a year and a half later, were married there. Throughout their marriage, both quietly and without fanfare, they helped the less fortunate - family, friends and neighbors. Because Azad never forgot the three years in the Istanbul orphanage and the kindness of those who worked there, the couple always contributed to orphan causes.

It is in their memory and in the memory of the orphans of the Armenian Genocide that this donation has been made.

The AMAA Board of Directors thanks the Melkonians for their generosity and for remembering to help the Armenian orphans.

Help Our Brothers and Sisters in Syria



We need your prayers and financial support now! We all know what is happening in Syria. Please make every effort to do your very best to make a financial contribution to keep the Armenian Evangelical Churches and Schools open. We need a minimum of \$26,000 per month to cover our payroll in Syria. We charge no tuition for our children, we keep the schools open to provide a safe haven for them, and nourish them physically, mentally, emotionally.

The following quote from Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, Vice President of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, says it all. Tomorrow may be a little late.



Within the last three months two rockets fell on Bethel School.

Syria, and specifically Aleppo, is the cradle of the Western Armenian Diaspora.

The name Aleppo is indelibly etched in the psyche of the post Genocide generation because Aleppo means survival, Aleppo means safety from the bloody sword of the Ottoman Turk, Aleppo means rebirth, Aleppo means rebuilding of homes, churches and schools, Aleppo means revival of the Armenian spirit. Losing Syria and Aleppo to the destructive machine of war will mean losing several very vibrant Armenian communities. It will mean losing a cultural heritage that took 100 years to build, and will leave a gaping hole in the soul of every Armenian regardless of whether they live in the Diaspora or the Motherland.”



Please help our brothers and sisters in Syria today.

Ways to help:

- Mail your check, made payable to AMAA, to AMAA - 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652.
- Call AMAA at 201.265.2607 to make a donation by Credit/Debit Card.
- Go online at amaa.org.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Vicki Hovanessian: A Life Devoted to Art

Art has been an integral part of the Hovanessians' life and both Rafi and Vicki are keenly devoted collectors of contemporary art.

Since 1995, Vicki Hovanessian, a graduate of the Armenian Evangelical College, Beirut, Lebanon, turned her gift for making things happen toward helping introduce talented Armenian artists to the international art scene by regularly curating exhibitions in Armenia and the United States.

Vicki organized an art show, entitled "Dreams and Visions" celebrating 20 contemporary Armenian artists, under the auspices of the Fund for Armenia Relief (FAR) in 1997 in Chicago. The works on display symbolized the aspirations of Armenian people as envisioned by the artists and Vicki's work was praised by a Congressional citation by Congressman Peter Visclosky. Other art shows that Vicki has organized include an exhibition in the Midwest in 1998 called "Windows to Armenia: Armenian Art Today," which commemorated the Centennial of the establishment of the Armenian Diocese in North America, "Beyond Icons" at the Yerevan State Museum in Yerevan, and "Art @ the Cathedral Giving Form to Faith," an exhibition marking the 40th anniversary of the Consecration of St.

Vartan Armenian Cathedral in New York City.

In 2010, Vicki received the Gold Medal of Mkhitar Heratsi from Yerevan State Medical University for curating an exhibition titled "Optimism: Armenian New Art," which was dedicated to the 90th anniversary of the University in Yerevan, Armenia. In 2012, she organized an exhibition at Bergen Community College in Paramus, NJ entitled "Fractured History, Reconstructing Identity: Degrees of Westernization in Armenian Paintings and Other Mediums," presenting works by 22 Armenian artists. It commemorated the 97th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and is a testimony to the strong will of Armenian culture that survived the horrors of World War I.

Vicki Hovanessian is the first woman who had the foresight to introduce and promote the contemporary artists of Armenia through exhibitions in the Diaspora. During those years, when everyone else concentrated on building churches, orphanages and hospitals, Shoghag's main goal was to promote the artists in the Diaspora, and thereby help to keep the artists in their homeland.

What makes Vicki different from other Armenian Diaspora activists? She sees one of her missions is to immortalize a less



Vicki Hovanessian, recipient of the 2013 prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor

known but quite worthy field of Armenian reality - Contemporary Art. Vicki always made the effort to make the Armenian contemporary art known and acceptable, first in its own country, then internationally, fostering the artists from Armenia to travel and participate in international events, but always to come back and continue working in their native country.

The AMAA Board of Directors congratulates Vicki for being the recipient of the Ellis Island Award in 2013 and thanks her and her husband, Dr. Rafi Hovanessian, for their dedication and service to the Armenian community worldwide.

*source - Armenian Reporter July 2, 2013
by Artsvi Bakhchinyan*



Meeting With the Ambassador

A dinner meeting was held with Ambassador Garen Nazarian and his wife Nana. Attending were Serge and Anita Buchakjian, HU and AMAA Board members; Andreas Roubian and Priya Katra, AMAA supporters; and Levon and Liliana Filian.

Fall Reading

HALEB Arachin Gayaran

ՀԱԼԷՊ Առաջին Կայարան

By Zaven Khanjian

The story of Aleppo has not yet been written. Antranig Zaroukian's "Men Without Childhood" «Մանկութիւն Չունեցող Մարդիկ» remains the most prominent literary work depicting life - if life meant mere survival - of young Armenian orphans in Aleppo, Syria, right after the Genocide.

Zaroukian highlighted the lackluster childhood of the surviving orphaned Armenian generation of young boys and girls who were denied the warm shelter of a paternal home, the love and care of an affectionate mother and the landscape of an ancestral homeland. They lived and grew up in orphanages on a foreign land that welcomed them with kindness, compassion and sympathy.

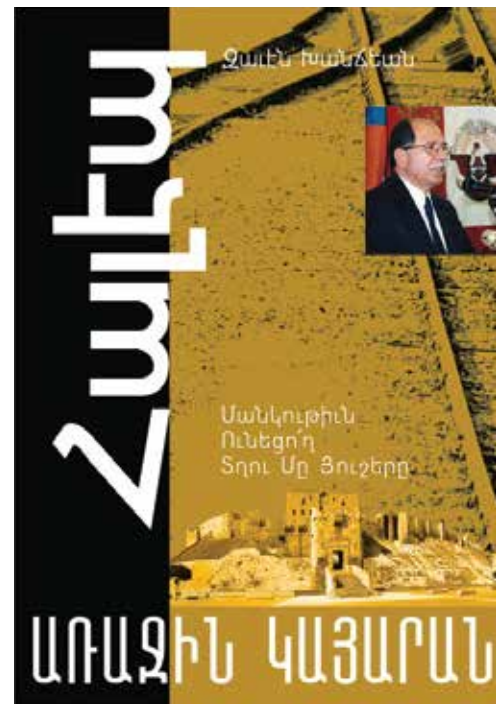
The generation of orphans was steadfast. They had no choice but to courageously adapt to the new friendly landscape. They acquired skills, trades and professions. They built schools and churches. They married and reared children. And they gave a new generation the joyful miracle called life. Aleppo, Syria, became the post Genocide cradle of Armenian renaissance in the Diaspora where Zaven Khanjian's generation grew up. And grew up happily, in contrast to Zaroukian's "Men Without Childhood."

"HALEB Araching Gayaran" ՀԱԼԷՊ Առաջին Կայարան is the story of a young boy who lived and tremendously enjoyed his childhood in HALEB. It shares the vibrant upbringing,

happy and amazing childhood stories, and beautiful memories of growing up. It's the story of the author's neighbors, teachers, classmates, the markets shopped at, bookstores visited, librarians that illuminated a generation, eateries frequented, leaders encountered, places visited, people met and people loved.

Published by the Tekeyan Cultural Association of Los Angeles (hc, 225 pages), "HALEB Arachin Gayaran" ՀԱԼԷՊ Առաջին Կայարան is available for \$25.00 and can be obtained by contacting the author at zaven@khanjianrealty.com.

Zaven Khanjian has also authored two more books in Armenian - Այս Տունը Քո՞ւկն է թէ Իմն - Is this Your House or Mine? (Reflections on a pilgrimage to Home - Historic Armenia - published in 2007) and Մտի եւ Մտքի Ցուլքեր - Srdi yev Mdki Tsoiker. - (Reflections of the Mind and Soul - poetry & more - published in 2010). Copies of the first book can also be obtained directly from the author. □



Meeting With UNDP Representatives

L to R: Harout Nercessian, AMAA-Armenia Representative; Levon Filian, AMAA Executive Director; Busetto Bradley, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative for the Republic of Armenia; and Armen Bayburtyan, Counselor to UN Resident Coordinator in Armenia.





Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցւոյ Ժառանգութիւնը

Վեր. Դոկտ. Վահան Թութիկեան*

3ուլիս 1, 1846-ին երեսունեօթ այր եւ երեք հայ կիներ հիմնեցին Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին Բերայի «աւետարանական մատուռ»ին մէջ, Իսթանպուլ (նախապէս Կոստանդնուպոլիս): Չորս տարի ետք, Նոյեմբեր 27, 1850, Օսմանեան Սուլթան Ապտուլ Մեճիտ պաշտօնական ճանաչում շնորհեց նորակազմ Եկեղեցիին: Այդ թուականէն ի վեր Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին կը շարունակէ իր անջատ գոյութիւնը:

167 տարիներու քրիստոնսանութր եւ ազգանութր ծառայութիւնը Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցւոյ՝ ի խնդիր հայ ժողովուրդի հոգեւոր, իմացական, ընկերային եւ մշակութային վերելքին՝ վկայութիւն մըն է այն իրողութեան որ ան զլացած չէ իր անսակարկ եւ բոլորանութր ծառայութիւնները մատուցանել քրիստոսի Եկեղեցիին եւ հայ ազգին:

Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին աշխարհ մը գոհողութեանց, քանի մը սերունդներու քրտինքի, արցունքի եւ արեան զնով կտրած անցած է պատմական իր լուսաւոր ու հրաշագեղ ուղին, իր ետին թողելով անփոխարինելի ժառանգութիւն մը. ժառանգութիւն մը որ պայմանաւորուած է մեր ցեղային խարխա եղող **հայութեամբ** եւ իմաստաւորուած հայութեան կեանքին իմաստ տուող **աւետարանով**:

Արդարեւ, պատմութեան տառապանքներէն եւ մարտընդուններէն ժառանգ մնացած այս փոքր եկեղեցին, որ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցի կը կոչուի, նուիրումի եւ մաքառումի սրտառու ղրուագներով կեանք մը ունի: Անոր պատմութիւնը արիւնաքամ հայութեան վերանորոգ ուժին եւ գոյատեւումի կամքին հրաշալի պատմութիւնն է:

Այո՛, դիւրին չեղաւ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցւոյ կեանքը: Բազմաթիւ ու բազմապիսի արտաքուստ ճնշումներ յաճախ սպառնացին անոր գոյութեան: Թերեւս նոյնքան անագորոյն եղան անոր ներքուստ դժուարութիւնները:

Ի հեճուկս այս ամենուն, անցնող 167 տարիներու ընթացքին քանի մը սերունդներ տողանցած են Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցւոյ թատերաբեմին վրայ: Անտարակոյս, անոնք իրենց դրոշմը դրած են Հայ Աւետարանականութեան վրայ մասնաւորապէս, եւ Հայ Ազգին վրայ ընդհանրապէս: Անկասկած անոնք իրենց ներդրումը ունեցած են հայ ազգի կրօնական, ազգային, մշակութային եւ հասարակական կեանքին այլեւայլ մարզերուն մէջ: Այսպէս օրինակ՝

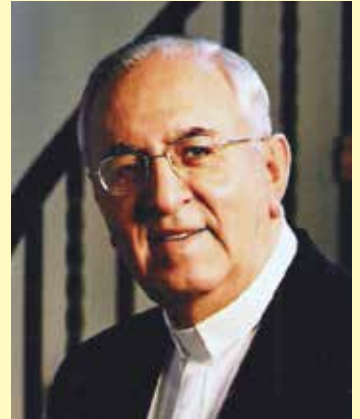
Կրօնական մարզի մէջ՝ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին միշտ շեշտած է հոգեւոր վերածնունդի եւ անձնական փորձառութեան անհրաժեշտութիւնը: Ան կը հաւատայ թէ այսպէս կոչուած ժառանգական հաւատք չկայ: Քրիստոնեայ ըլլալ անհատական բանաւոր որոշումի մը արդիւնքն է, որ անձ մը կը կատարէ հաւատքով, Աստուծոյ հանդէպ կատարեալ նուիրումով եւ Քրիստոսի հաւատարիմ աշակերտութեամբ:

Դաստիարակութեան մարզին մէջ՝ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին կը շարունակէ շեշտել նոր սերունդի հոգեւոր դաստիարակութեան կարեւորութիւնը: Հայ Աւետարանականութիւնը միշտ հաւատացող եղած է այն իրողութեան որ քրիստոնէական դաստիարակութիւնը եկեղեցւոյ հիմնական առաքելութիւններէն մինն է: Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին իր ամենօրեայ եւ կիրակնօրեայ դպրոցներով, պատանեաց եւ երիտասարդաց կազմակերպութիւններով կը շարունակէ օրինութեան միջոց մը ըլլալ:

Կրթական մարզի մէջ՝ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին յառաջատար ուժ մըն է, որ հայ ազգը օժտած է կրթական օժախներու լայն ցանցով մը, ազգի զաւակներուն ջամբելով բարձրագոյն ուսում եւ անոնցմէ թրծելով ընտրանի ուսեալ եւ գիտակից սերունդներ:

Աւետարանչական մարզի մէջ՝ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցւոյ կարեւոր ծառայութիւններէն մէկն ալ եղած է Աստուածաշունչ Մատեանը մատչելի դարձնել հայ ժողովուրդի զանգուածներուն՝ իրենց գործածած բարբառով:

Բարեգործական մարզի մէջ՝ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցւոյ նպաստը եղած է խիստ յատկանշական: Ան իր ծննդեան օրէն ի վեր նուիրուած է բարեսիրութեան եւ մարդասիրական ծառայութեան: Ինչպէս անցեալին Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին Մերձաւոր Արեւելեան երկիրներու մէջ «Բարի Սամարացի»ութիւն ըրաւ մեր «Մնացորդաց»ին, այսօր եւս ան կը շարունակէ իր մարդասիրական եւ աւետարանչական գործերը՝ Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան միջոցաւ:



Մշակութային մարզի մէջ՝ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին, ինչպէս անցեալին, ներկայիս ալ իր նպաստը մատուցած է եւ կը շարունակէ մատուցանել մեր ժողովուրդին ամենուրեք: Իր եկեղեցիներով, մամուլով, դպրոցներով, կազմակերպութիւններով, գիրով եւ գրականութեամբ իր նկատելի ներդրումը կ'ընէ հայ մշակոյթի զանաւարտին: Հայաստանի թէ Արտերկրի կարեւոր Կեդրոններու մէջ իր տասնեակ մը թերթերով եւ հրատարակութիւններով, Հայ Աւետարանական մամուլը անուրանալի ծառայութիւն մըն է Հայ մշակոյթին:

Հասարակական մարզի մէջ՝ Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին մատուցած է եւ կը շարունակէ մատուցանել անգնահատելի ծառայութիւն: Թուական տոկոսի համեմատութեամբ Հայ Աւետարանականներու մասնակցութիւնը մեր ազգային կեանքի գրեթէ բոլոր մարզերուն մէջ նկատելի եւ ուշագրաւ իրողութիւն մըն է: Մտաւորական, կրթական, դեկավարական, գիտութեան, արուեստի, եւ կազմակերպչական կեանքի մէջ Հայ Աւետարանականներ իրենց պատուաբեր տեղը գրաւած են:

Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցւոյ պատմութիւնը, տարիներու իր հոլովոյթին հետ, կատարելապէս կը պատշաճի հայ ժողովուրդի բարոյական եւ հոգեւոր կենսունակութեան, անոր դիմադրական ոգիին, անյողողոյ տոկունութեան եւ վերապրելու հրաշալի կարողութեան:

Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին իր կրօնական, կրթական, մշակութային եւ ընկերային ներդրումով եւ մատուցած ծառայութիւններով մեծ ազդեցութիւն ունեցած է հայ ազգի կեանքին մէջ: Արդարեւ, ԺԹ դարու կէսէն մինչեւ Առաջին Աշխարհամարտն ու Հայկական Յեղասպանութիւնը, Եկեղեցին իր գօտեպնդիչ դերն ու ազդեցութիւնը ունեցաւ յատկապէս բնաշխարհի հայկական զանգուածներուն: Այդ պատճառով ալ ան արագ կերպով ուժնաւորուեցաւ եւ տարածուեցաւ: Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցւոյ բերած նպաստը, ինչպէս անցեալին, ներկայիս ալ, օրհնութեան աղբիւր մը կը հանդիսանայ յանուր հայութեան: □

* Վեր. Դոկտ. Վահան Թութիկեան Վարիչ Տնօրէնն է Հայ Աւետարանական Համաշխարհային Խորհուրդին

Սարգիս Տարագճեան

Սարգիս Տարագճեան ծնած է 1923-ին՝ Կիլիկիոյ *Ճարթըսլը* (Անթէպի մօտ) գիւղաքաղաքին մէջ՝ Պատուելի եւ Տիկին Նազարէթ եւ Արուսեակ Տարագճեան ամուլներուն, ու եղած է չորրորդը՝ անոնց հինգ մանչ զաւակներուն – հինգերորդը ըլլալով այս տողերը գրողը՝ Վեր. Պարգեւ Ն. Տարագճեանը: Սարգիսին ծնունդէն քանի մը տարիներ ետք կը մեռնի հայրը՝ երբ ան պաշտօնով կը գտնուէր *Գըրըք Խան՝ Իսթենտերուն*, Սուրիա (այժմ՝ Թուրքիա): Ծատ չանցած, ընտանիքը կը փոխադրուի Հալէպ ուր Արուսեակ մայրիկ՝ ֆիզիքապէս տկար, սակայն հոգեւորապէս կորովի՝ կը մեծցնէ հինգ որբուկները Աստուծոյ ճամբաներուն մէջ՝ ազգին ու Աւետարանական համայնքին տալով երկու ուսուցիչներ՝ Մեսրոպ եւ Վահան, երկու Հոգեւոր Հովիւներ՝ Էմմանուէլ եւ Պարգեւ, ու մէկ ընտիր ոսկերիչ-արհեստաւոր – Սարգիսը:



Սարգիս իսկապէս տաղանդաւոր էր իր արհեստին մէջ, բայց նաեւ խիստ պարկեշտ ու վստահելի: Իր քեռիին՝ Հալէպի անուանի ոսկերիչ՝ Նէճիպ Ուստա Ծիրիքճեանի շունչին ու հսկողութեան տակ՝ ան սորված էր ըլլալ ոչ միայն բացառիկ արհեստաւոր մը, հապա նաեւ հեղինակաւոր մասնագէտ մը՝ թանկագին քարերու, ինչպէս՝ ադամանդի, գոհարեղէնի, ու զմրուխտ քարերու: Սակայն այս բոլորը իր ընթացիկ օրերու զբաղումներուն տակ կ'իյնային: Կիրակի օրեր ան եկեղեցական գործերով զբաղած կ'ըլլար: Ան երկար տարիներ Հալէպի մէջ ծառայեց եկեղեցիին ու համայնքին իբրեւ կիրակնօրեայ դպրոցի ուսուցիչ, եկեղեցիի խնամակալութեան անդամ, ու դպրոցի հոգաբարձու: Անոր խօսքը կշիռ ունէր իբրեւ դպրոցի հոգաբարձու ու համայնքային ժողովի անդամ:

1955 թ.-ին՝ Սարգիս ամուսնացաւ իր անդամակցած եկեղեցիէն (Տաւուսիէ – Հալէպ)՝ Օր. Էլիզապէթ Գալճեանին հետ՝ կազմելով բարեպաշտ ու երջանիկ ընտանիք մը: Աստուած օրհնեց զանոնք երկու մանչ՝ Արա եւ Ծահէ, ու մէկ աղջիկ՝ Կրէյս՝ զաւակներով: Ան եղաւ իր ընտանեկան յարաբերութիւններուն մէջ տիպար ամուսին, եւ հայր: 1980 թ.-ի վերջաւորութեան ընտանեօք փոխադրուեցան Գանատայի Թոթոնթօ քաղաքը, ուր անմիջապէս միացան տեղւոյն Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիին՝ դառնալով գործունեայ անդամներ:

2010-ին, Սարգիսն ու զաւակները դժբախտութիւնը կ'ունենան կորսնցնելու Էլիզապէթը՝ որ եղած էր թանկագին ու բարեպաշտ կին, ու սիրալիր մայր՝ իր հարազատներուն: Անոր բացակայութիւնը ընտանիքէն ներս, ու եկեղեցական շրջանակի մէջ ցարդ զգալի է:

Սարգիս բաժնուեցաւ այս աշխարհէն Ապրիլ 10, 2013-ին, Թորոնթոյի մէջ:

Վեր. Պարգեւ Ն. Տարագճեան
Կրտսեր եղբայրը



Kevork Akmakjian

Kevork Akmakjian, beloved father of Rev. Vatche Ekmekjian, Pastor of Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church of Downey, CA, passed away August 4 in Pasadena, CA. He was 81.



Mr. Akmakjian was born in Syria and raised in a Christian home. At a young age he dedicated his life to the Lord. He attended church faithfully and enjoyed various faith communities including the Armenian Brotherhood Bible Churches of Syria and Pasadena, the Pasadena Armenian Church of the Nazarene, as well as Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church in Downey. With his beloved wife, he raised a wonderful family. He is survived by his wife Hermineh, sons George (Suzi), Rev. Vatche (Lena) and Krikor (Shoghig) and five grandchildren.

The funeral service was held on August 9 at the Pasadena Armenian Church of the Nazarene in Pasadena, CA. □

Prlantie Gaidzakian

Prlantie Aprahamian Gaidzakian passed away on August 23, in São Paulo, Brazil at the age of 97. In the Armenian community of São Paulo, she was one of the remnants of the Genocide of 1915 and the oldest member of her church.



Born in Cesaréia, Turkey (Historic Armenia) to Anouche and Simon Aprahamian, Prlantie never knew her father, as he was hanged in the public square by Ottoman Turks when she was only three months old. She lived in Cesaréia until she was three, when her family moved to Beirut, Lebanon to flee the Armenian Genocide. Prlantie had a very difficult childhood, as her widowed mother could hardly support her four young children, the oldest being only 11.

Prlantie was eager to go to school but since her family could not afford her schooling, she cleaned classrooms after school hours to pay for her education at Mrs. Wilb's College. With much sacrifice, she was able to finish her schooling at British School in 1936. However, just one month short of receiving her diploma, Prlantie and her mother had to move to Brazil to join her older sisters Angel and Shnorhik, who by then were married and living in São Paulo, Brazil. Her oldest sister, Yertchanik, had already married at the age of 16 and was living in California.

On July 3, 1937, Prlantie married Hagop Gaidzakian, the nephew of the late Rev.

Peniamin Gaidzakian, and together they had three children, Maeda Ana (who died at the age of 2), Marlene and Dorothy.

Prlantie loved her church, the Armenian Evangelical Church of São Paulo, very much. She served the church in many capacities, especially as the Treasurer of the Church Trustees and President of the Women's Society. She also loved Armenian poetry and music. During the 1960s and 1970s, she participated in many Armenian cultural events and played in many Armenian theatrical performances in renowned theaters of the city. From 1972-1977 she also taught Armenian language classes at the Armenian Turian Day School of São Paulo.

Although she never forgot the hardships of her childhood, she thanked God for having found a land like Brazil where she could realize her dreams and live a life of almost a century with her beloved family. She was a person full of life, perseverance, will power and firm in her decisions. But the greatest joy of her life was to demonstrate and share her faith and unconditional love in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In her 97 years of life, she never became ill, until she was called to her eternal home, like a flame of a candle, extinguishing slowly.

Prlantie is survived by her daughter Marlene, married to Jorge Gazebyukian; Dorothy, married to Nubar Santurian; granddaughters Grace, married to Rev. Dr. Roy Abrahamian, Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of São Paulo; Gladys, married to Luciano Thomaz de Silva; Carla Christine married to Luiz dos Santos e Silva and three great-grandchildren.

A funeral service was held at the Armenian Evangelical Church of São Paulo on August 24, followed by internment at the Gethsemane Cemetery. □

Robert Vartan Haig

Robert Vartan Haig of Los Angeles, CA, passed away on May 22. He was 88.

Born on May 5, 1925, Robert was a graduate of Franklin High School and was a proud Navy WWII Veteran.

He was the owner of Bob Haig Automotive in Highland Park, Master of South Pasadena Masonic Lodge and President of Kiwanis.

He was admired for his good business sense. He was featured in L.A. Magazine in the mid-1970s as owning the best garage in the Los Angeles region. His garage was the gathering place in Highland Park where people of all backgrounds came to get the latest community news, to discuss politics, get support for church and charitable activities, and



to get advice from Mr. Haig on their various personal projects, as well as honest, reliable auto and truck maintenance. In fact, the police district relied on Mr. Haig's establishment to maintain their entire police car fleet.

Robert was well known for his keen sense of humor – no one could tell a joke any better – and for his ability to uplift people no matter what was going on in their lives. He loved music and was a gifted jazz pianist.

He became known and best loved for his compassion and his quiet personal ministry helping those in need. Whether it was his optometrist's assistant who needed funds to help her grandmother, whether it was the young law student struggling to feed his family, whether it was the neighbor who needed help overcoming his addiction to alcohol, whether it was the friend who needed help repairing the roof, whether it was the district legislator struggling to decide on how to cast a critical vote, whether it was the minister who needed one more donation for the church to meet its obligations, or whether it was the members of his own family who needed his companionship, he anonymously helped people at the most critical times.

Robert is survived by nieces Helen and Mari Haig, nephew Ted (and his wife Carole and sons Simon, Costel, and Michael) Haig, and many dear cousins and friends. He was the brother of the late Dr. Pierre Vahe Haig and brother-in-law of the late Alice Jernazian Haig. □

Sam Hamo

Sam Hamo, husband of Phyllis Hamo, former President of Haigazian University Women's Auxiliary of Los Angeles, passed away on August 16 in Anaheim, CA. He was 82.



Born in Los Angeles, he was the middle child of John (Hamazasp) and Rose (Vartanoush) Meketarian Hamo. The Meketarian name was dropped when his father emigrated from Armenia and settled in Los Angeles. Sam's early years were spent living with his parents, his sister Sadie, and brother Ector in East Los Angeles and Montebello, CA.

He attended Armenian Saturday School for seven years at the Armenian Educational Foundation and learned to read and write Armenian which was spoken at home. He graduated from Garfield High School, earned his bachelor's degree in accounting from California State University Los Angeles and served in the United States Army from 1953-55 and in the Reserves until 1961.

When he was in his early thirties, Sam invited a young teacher, Phyllis Asatoorian, to accompany him to a New Year's Day

Rose Bowl game in Pasadena. Phyllis was unable to attend, but Sam persevered. A year later he called her back and invited her to the next Rose Bowl game. She accepted... and the rest is history. Their marriage in 1965 was officiated and blessed by Hayr Sourp Sumbat Lapajian at the Holy Cross Armenian Apostolic Church in downtown Los Angeles.

Sam and Phyllis would take his widowed mother to church in Los Angeles on Sundays. About that time the Hamos received an invitation to attend a social gathering of the United Armenian Congregational Church Mr. & Mrs. Group where they met a number of couples including Rev. Paul and Grace Avazian who invited them to worship at UACC. Several senior members of the congregation remembered Phyllis's grandfather, Badveli Markar Asatoorian, who had pastored them at the Gethsemane Church three generations earlier.

Sam was a retailer most of his life, beginning in business with his brother. In the early 1970s he opened a store called "Gamesmanship" which specialized in board games and he maintained the proprietorship until his retirement. The business provided opportunities for the Hamos to travel to trade shows in the United States and abroad. Their first trip to Armenia was with the Armenian Assembly tour of 1995. In 1999 they journeyed to Lebanon for commencement exercises where Phyllis, as President of the Los Angeles chapter of the Haigazian University Women's Auxiliary, presented scholarships to needy students.

Sam supported a number of Armenian churches and charities and served on the board of the Ararat Eskijian Museum in Mission Hills, CA. He enjoyed the monthly luncheons of the Ararat Home Massis Guild in Montebello where the men's table offered him an opportunity to break bread with old friends and new.

Following his retirement Sam was stricken with a neurological disorder. After he suffered a stroke in 2012, his health deteriorated.

Sam was a loving husband, devoted father, and steadfast friend. He is survived by his wife Phyllis; sons Todd and Eric; sister Sadie Kachoeff; brother Ector Hamo (and his wife Gay), and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. □

Lucine Loshkajian

Lucine Hasserjian Loshkajian of Springfield, MA was called safely Home on June 5. She was 95. Lucine was born in Aintab, Turkey on August 31, 1917, to Gulenia and Setrak Hasserjian. At the tender age of eight, she lost her mother, but was



lucky to have a loving stepmother whom she cherished all her life.

The family moved to Aleppo, Syria. Together with her five brothers, Krikor, Albert, Paul, Sarkis, and her only surviving brother Puzant they became active members of the Emmanuel Armenian Evangelical Church. Lucine attended The Gertasiratz Elementary School and graduated from the Aleppo College for Girls. She was a member of the basketball and volleyball teams at school and loved her youth group at church.

In 1937, Lucine married Avedis Loshkajian, a businessman and very involved member, trustee, elder of the Emmanuel Armenian Church, and had four children, George, Hermine, Seta, and Albert, and together in 1946, they moved to Beirut, Lebanon, where they settled and became active members of the thriving Armenian community and the First Armenian Evangelical Church. Lucine lost her husband to cancer in 1969 and, in 1975, moved to the United States and settled in Tenafly, New Jersey, where she became a devoted member of the evangelical community and a member of the Armenian Presbyterian Church. Lucine's joy multiplied as she embraced the four spouses of her children, Nahabed, Khoren, Nora and Shelley. In 2005, she moved to Springfield, Massachusetts.

Her ten grandchildren, Lisa, Michael, Maria, Alex, Gracy, Gina, Garen, Gregory, Ani, and Nina, and her seven great grandchildren, Ani, Raffi, Shahe, Lara, Max, Katia and Elina, were the love of her life.

Her love had no boundaries. With her good nature and accommodating disposition, she always accepted with a smile what life offered her, and gave her best and her most. She loved unconditionally, and, by her gentle demeanor and wit touched each of her children's and grandchildren's lives.

She was a God-fearing and caring woman who loved her Lord, gave her best to her neighbor, cared and healed the broken-hearted, was meek and humble, kind and generous, and loved the life that her Lord had granted her. In 2013 she completed her journey on earth. □

Ardson Shegoian

Ardson Shegoian of San Francisco, CA passed away on April 28. He was 95.

Ardson's parents, Ghazar and Zaroohy, fled Van (historic Armenia) in 1915 and during the 180 mile walk to Yerevan, his grandparents and brother died. Ardson was born in Yerevan in 1918.

His parents were unhappy living in Bolshevik, Armenia during the beginning



stages of Communism and decided to leave Yerevan in 1922 to start a new life in the United States. They settled in Kingsburg, CA and lived on a farm, where they were sharecroppers. Ardson went to school and learned English. His father died when he was only 17 years old, and he had to support himself and his mother.

Ardson came to San Francisco in 1936 with his Uncle Vartan Gazarian to look for work. He loved working with wood and was able to get his start in a cabinet shop. Ardson and his mother had a \$1,000 life insurance policy on Ghazar and they were able to buy a house in San Francisco for \$5,000. Ardson lived in that house for over 70 years.

Ardson served in World War II in the Army Corps of Engineers in Guadalcanal, Philippines and post war Japan. After returning home to San Francisco, he was introduced to Gladys Manoogian by the late Rev. Nishan Hachian. Ardson and Gladys were married in Fresno and considered it their second home. They lived with Zaroohy, three generations in one house, while Ardson continued his career as an architectural draftsman and project manager.

Extremely religious and very giving, Ardson was an Elder and Sunday School Superintendent in St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. He was the Church Moderator at Calvary Armenian Congregational Church in San Francisco, CA and served on the Building Committee. He was also a 30 year member of the Knights of Vartan and a past Commander.

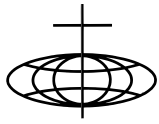
Ardson is survived by his wife Gladys; daughter Sharlyn Shegoian and her husband Carlos Arroyo, son James Shegoian and his wife Victoria, two grandsons and a great-granddaughter.

Funeral services were held in Kingsburg, CA on May 3 and a Memorial Service was held at the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church on May 11. □

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff also wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends whose names were submitted to us for publication in the AMAA NEWS.

- * **Aram Casparian**
Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY
- * **Maral Joulakian**
Montrose, CA
- * **Edward Noga**
Brunswick, ME
- * **Sarkis Tutunjian**
Watertown, MA

* *Memorials designated for AMAA*



Armenian Missionary Association of America
31 West Century Road
Paramus, NJ 07652

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Paramus, NJ
Permit No. 55

SAVE THE DATE!



● **AND** ●

GET INTO

The Spirit

OF CHRISTMAS

HOSTED BY THE AMAA

NJ ORPHAN & CHILD CARE COMMITTEE

STYLE IN MOTION

FASHION FUN & LUNCHEON

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2013, 11:00AM

● *Neiman Marcus, Third Level* ●

● **503 GARDEN STATE PLAZA, PARAMUS, NJ** ●

DONATION \$80.00

ALL PROCEEDS

GO TO THE

**AMAA CHILD SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM-EMERGENCY MEDICAL FUND
LIMITED SEATING • RSVP BY NOVEMBER 29 • BRING A FRIEND!**